

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Federal-State Joint board on)	CC Docket No. 96-45
Universal Service)	

**NRTA and OPASTCO
SUPPORT FOR
MOTION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME**

The National Rural Telecom Association (NRTA) and the Organization for the Promotion and Advancement of Small Telecommunications Companies (OPASTCO) strongly support the Motion for Extension of Time filed by the United States Telecom Association (USTA) on April 2, 2002. USTA's motion requests a 45-day extension of time to file both comments and reply comments on a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking¹ concerning issues from the Ninth Report and Order in CC Docket No. 96-45 remanded by the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit.

As USTA accurately explains, there are several proceedings regarding universal service and the regulatory treatment of wireline broadband facilities and services that all have comments and reply comments due within the next two months. These issues are vitally important to the small and rural incumbent local exchange carrier (ILEC) segment of the industry. In particular, there are currently only two days separating the due dates for comments in the proceeding on the 10th Circuit remand (April 10) and the proceeding regarding the universal service contribution methodology (April 12). The close

¹ *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Order, CC Docket No. 96-45, FCC 02-41 (re. Feb. 15, 2002).

proximity of the comment and reply due dates for all of these proceedings threatens full and meaningful participation in each, particularly for small associations such as NRTA and OPASTCO with limited staff resources.

Therefore, NRTA and OPASTCO support USTA's request for a 45-day extension of time for filing both comments and reply comments in the proceeding concerning issues from the Ninth Report and Order in CC Docket No. 96-45 remanded by the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals. The due date for comments should be extended to May 28 and reply comments to June 10.

Respectfully submitted,

NATIONAL RURAL TELECOM ASSOCIATION

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**ORGANIZATION FOR THE
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April 5, 2002

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Alicia C. Reid, hereby certify that a copy of the Support for Motion for Extension of Time by the National Rural Telecom Association and the Organization for the Promotion and Advancement of Small Telecommunications Companies was sent on this, the 5th day of April, 2002 by first class United States mail, postage prepaid, to those listed on the attached sheet.

By: /s/ Alicia C. Reid
Alicia C. Reid

SERVICE LIST
CC Docket No. 96-45

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